DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 217 323 CG 015 929

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TITLE A Cross-Cultural Normative Approach to Late Adolescent Development within a Baltesian Model.
PUB DATE Apr 81
NOTE 16p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Western Psychological Association (61st, Los Angeles, CA, April 9-12, 1981).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adolescent Development; Adolescents; Adults; Cohort Analysis; Comparative Testing; *Cross Cultural Studies; *Cultural Differences; Developmental Stages; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Norms; *Personality Development; Personality Measures; Psychological Patterns; Secondary Education; Sex Differences
IDENTIFIERS *Australia; *New Zealand; *Western Samoa

ABSTRACT

Dramatic accounts of adolescent turmoil may confuse psychopathology with normal development if derived from the study of clinical populations. To compare the development of normal adolescents, 108 students aged 17-22 from the United States, Australia, New Zealand and Western Samoa were studied. Results of three different personality measures showed that in these four countries the similarities among students outweighed the differences. Young adults were not disturbed, highly imaginative, or sexually obsessed; they were neither overly constricted nor fully mature. Their fantasies were a mixture of happy and unhappy without a great deal of parental conflict. Minor differences between cultures were found; Western Samoa showed the most cultural differences. The findings suggest that for the normative historical and age appropriate influences, these young adults from four countries are similar. (JAC)

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A Cross-cultural Normative Approach to Late Adolescent Development Within a Baltesian Model

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A Cross-cultural Normative Approach to Late Adolescent Development Within a Baltesian Model

While dramatic accounts of adolescent turmoil make exciting reading (Freud, Erikson, Keniston, Mead, Blos, etc.), they may perpetuate a major theoretical problem, namely the confusion of psychopathology with normal development arising from the study of clinical populations. The study of healthy or at least normal samples will permit better comparisons to lay observations. Eventually, the abnormal cases should be absorbable within general developmental theories rather than vice versa.

Perhaps the most comprehensive development approach at this time is that proposed by Baltes and his coworkers (1979). This pluralistic model (Figure 1) utilizes advances in many fields so that the complexities of the nature/nurture interaction can, to some degree be understood.

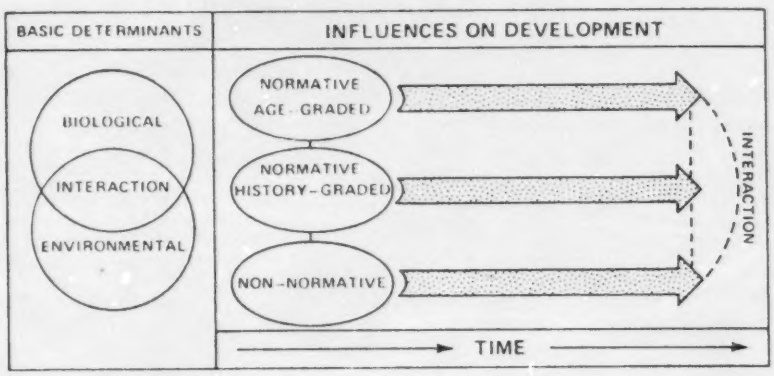

Figure 1 Representation of the operation of three major influence systems on life-span development: normative age-graded, normative history-grade, and non-normative life events. These influence systems interact and differ in their combinatorial profile for different individuals and for different behaviors.

All individuals share the same biological or maturational sequences. Description of these sequences was the intent of Freud, Piaget, Gesell and Erikson as well as others. Though cultural variations do exist the normative age-graded approach is species wide. A second normative approach would center on influences which occur to members of a given cohort (generation) existing at one time. World wide events such as wars and inflation affect even geographically separated peoples. This effect will be modified by differences in cultural responsiveness to planetary influence. Cross-cultural studies allow for comparisons within an age cohort. Lastly, non-normative or idiographic events will further differentiate individuals from their cohorts. These will differ even within a culture, an example being the death of one's parents. Small but important events can lead to differences even in identical twins. Denenberg's factorial approach to programming life experiences (1968) and, in fact, most of the research following Hebb's "The Organization of Behavior" (1949) attempts to pinpoint critical early experiences with lasting effects. Though this model, similar to a chemical research approach, is useful the nested environments model proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1979) seems truer to the reality of development. The individual develops within a home or family, in a particular subculture, in a broader culture, at a particular world time and under regulatory mechanisms true to homo sapiens.

The normative age-graded influences may be universally applicable and the normative history-graded influences may cover a cohort or generation growing up in the same decades. This would seem to depend on whether or not the whole planet is interdependent. If a culture was truly isolated perhaps those individuals would not be affected by world events. In the Baltesian model cultural effects would be part of non-normative influences; yet it seems that ther should be a fourth category--normative culture graded influences which

operate for those growing up in a particular culture. Finally, non-normative or ipsative events may influence development. These may be powerful enough to dramatically influence personality development or interact with other factors.

Cross-cultural normative studies permit the comparison of peoples growing up under different circumstances. The research of Mead, Benedict, Malinowski and other early social scientists focused on such issues as: the universality of the developmental process and the oepidal situation, sexuality in childhood and neurosis, and toilet training, weaning and aggression. The works of Whiting have continued to investigate many of these variables.

Cook (1942) exploring the Samoan personality gave Rorschachs to 50 young men in Upolu and concluded that American norms were not appropriate. He concluded that Samoans were like young European children, immature and showing poverty in mental organization.

Torrance and Johnson (1961) compared Western Samoan children to Australian, German, Indian and Georgian (U.S.A.) and found them lower in originality. They hypothesized that some of the reasons might be: 1) emphasis on remembering, 2) acceptance of authority hierarchy, 3) submission, and 4) not doing anything until told.

A very curious report on New Zealanders comes out of Ausubel's (1960) impressionistic work, "The Fern and the Tiki". Without collecting data Ausubel described the New Zealander as not warmly welcoming strangers, chauvinistic and bigoted and acutely sensitive to criticisms from foreigners. He further characterized them as somewhat unambitious not work motivated.

Our study examines three western, industrialized cultures (U.S.A., Australia and New Zealand) as well as one semi-industrialized, more different culture (Western Samoa). We are seeking evidence supportive of the Baltesian model. Are there psychological similarities for all 17-22 year olds? Are

young adults from similar cultures more similar? Are certain idiographic events powerful enough to influence personality development regardless of the cultural milieu? A not to be forgotten goal is merely to see what young normal adults look like on a battery of often used psychological instruments. These are to be considered sampling procedures and not measuring devices as Florence Goodenough said at the AAAS meeting of 1935.

Methodology

108 students between the ages of 17-22 were examined using a battery of psychological procedures. This group of volunteers consisted of 18 Americans, 55 New Zealanders, 23 Australians and 12 Western Samoans. There was an imbalance of 30 males and 78 females within out total population. All subjects were contacted through universities and colleges and spent approximately 3 hours in the test situation. The Western Samoan students were seniors at a 'college' which is equivalent to an American high school.

Procedures

All the instruments were group administered in either one or two sessions.

The Rorschach Inkblots were presented by slide projector with each subject writing their responses and also explaining them in terms of location and determinants. Subjects were given 2 minutes for blots I-V and 3 minutes for blots VI-X.

Thematic Apperception Test cards, 1, 2, 5, 4, 14, 10, 13 MF, 12BG, 15, 20 were presented by slide projector and subject were given 3 minutes to record their stories. They were instructed to make a complete story with present, past and future ending.

Scoring for the Rorschach and TAT was done by a Ph.D. clinician with over 15 years of diagnostic experience. During the scoring the rater did not know

the groups of the subjects. The Klopfer System (1962) was the major scoring system utilized.

The Personal Orientation Inventory (Shostrom, 1974) and the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (F.H.S., 1965) and a biographical questionniare (Appendix A) were all group administered.

All forms were coded so that identities could remain anonymous.

Results

After thousands of statistical comparisons the overall conclusion is the remarkable similarity between these young adults on our different personality measures. This is true for procedures as different at the Rorschach and the Tennessee Self-Concept.

Tables I - VIII and Figure 2 show the ususal responses for our total sample, each country and then each country with differentiation by sex.

TABLE I

Group Administered Rorschach Norms

	Total Sample (N= 108)		U.S.A. (N=18)	Australia (N=23)	New Zealand (N=55)	W. Samoa (N=12)
	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	$\bar{X}$	$\bar{X}$	$\bar{X}$	$\bar{X}$
# of Responses	13.83	5.46	13.1	17.3	12.9	12.7
# Pure Form Responses	4.32	3.16	4.1	4.9	4.3	3.8
$\Sigma C = \frac{FC + 2CF + 3C}{2}$	2.91	1.84	2.6	3.4	2.9	2.7
# of Human Responses	3.98	2.45	3.5	4.9	3.9	3.4
# of Animal Responses	6.79	3.34	6.9	8.4	6.4	5.7
# Original	2.49	2.77	2.2	3.7	1.9	3.3
# Blatant Sex Resp.	.29	.64	.2	.5	.3	--
# Live & Movement	2.62	2.23	2.5	3.5	2.5	1.6

TABLE II

Group Administered Rorschach Norms X Sex

	Total N=108		13	5	18	5	38	17	9	3
			U.S.A.		Australia		New Zealand		W. Samoa	
	Male	Female	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
# of Responses	14.07	13.74	13.6	11.8	16.2	21.2	12.9	12.8	12.5	13.0
# Pure Form	5.00	4.06	4.2	4.2	4.2	7.2	4.0	4.8	3.8	4.0
Σ C	2.33	3.13	3.0	1.4	3.7	2.4	3.1	2.4	2.4	3.3
# of Human Responses	4.33	3.85	3.9	2.6	4.4	6.6	3.8	4.1	3.0	4.7
# of Animal Responses	5.83	7.15	7.9	4.2	8.3	8.4	6.6	5.8	6.1	4.3
# Original Responses	3.13	2.24	2.5	1.2	2.4	8.8	1.9	2.1	3.3	3.0
# Blatant Sex Resp.	.47	.22	.3	--	.4	1.0	.2	.5	--	--
# Live and Movement	2.90	2.51	2.6	2.2	3.3	4.0	2.3	2.9	1.4	2.0

*p < .05 M=males
**p < .01 F-females

Australians give more Rorschach responses than New Zealanders (NZ)**. Australian women and Australian men give more reponses than NZ women or NZ men.* Australian males give more original responses than American males* or NZ males**. Samoans give less sexual responses than Australians. Blatent sex responses are rare for all groups.

TABLE III

Group Administered Thematic Apperception Test
(Cards 1, 2, 5, 4, 15, 10, 13, MF, 12 BG, 15, 20)

	Total Sample		U.S.A.	Australia	New Zealand	W. Samoa
	$\bar{X}$	S.D.				
Stories, Happy Ending	2.71	1.90	2.5	3.2	2.8	1.6
Unhappy Endings	4.17	2.20	3.2	3.7	4.8	5.2
Neutral Endings	3.07	2.28	4.3	2.9	2.7	3.3
Parental Conflict	1.01	.90	.8	1.0	1.1	1.0
Sexual Stories	1.04	1.02	.6	1.3	1.1	.8
Wild Imagination	.78	1.44	.4	.4	.9	1.6

The 10 TAT cards were selected to give us a representation of the imagination, conflicts, perhaps hopes and emotions of these young adults. Sexual stories and displays of wild imagination are infrequent (Table III). While the endings of the stories are roughly divided between happy, unhappy and neutral endings, the Western Samoans had more unhappy and less happy endings than other groups ($p < .05$). The also showed more imagination ($p < .05$).

TABLE IV

Group Administered TAT X Sex

	Total		U.S.A.		Australia		New Zealand		W. Samoa	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Stories, Happy Ending	2.27	2.88	2.9	1.6	3.4	2.4	3.0	2.5	1.4	1.0
Unhappy Endings	4.43	4.06	3.0	3.6	3.7	3.6	4.3	4.8	5.2	5.0
Neutral Endings	3.13	3.05	4.1	4.8	2.8	3.0	2.7	2.7	3.3	3.0
Parental Conflict	1.10	.97	.9	.6	.9	1.4	1.0	1.2	1.1	.7
Sexual Stories	1.33	.92	.5	.8	1.1	2.0	1.1	1.2	.3	2.0
Wild Imagination	.87	.74	.5	.4	.4	.4	.9	.8	1.2	2.7

When sex differences in story production are examined (Table IV) some interesting trends can be seen. Men have more happy endings than women except among the Samoans. Women give more stories with sexuality than men generally, though the only within country difference which reaches significance ($p < .05$) is Samoa.

TABLE V

Tennessee Self-Concept (Standard Score)

	Total Sample		U.S.A.	Australia	New Zealand	W. Samoa
	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	$\bar{X}$	$\bar{X}$	$\bar{X}$	$\bar{X}$
Self Criticism	50.99	7.98	49.8	52.5	50.7	51.3
Total Positive	46.19	9.73	44.4	46.8	46.4	46.7
Identity	45.02	10.22	44.7	44.0	45.0	47.7
Self-Satisfaction	50.74	9.75	50.3	52.2	51.0	47.8
Behavior	43.79	10.07	42.4	43.4	44.3	44.3
Physical Self	43.33	9.15	40.6	43.2	44.0	44.8
Moral/Ethical	47.44	9.24	47.8	48.5	47.8	43.3
Personal Self	50.45	10.64	46.6	51.6	51.1	51.1
Family Self	47.17	11.28	50.3	47.5	45.6	49.1
Social Self	48.24	10.60	44.2	48.8	49.1	49.5

TABLE VI

Tennessee Self-Concept (Standard Score) X Sex

	Total		U.S.A.		Australia		New Zealand		W. Samoa	
	Male	Female	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Self Criticism	50.43	51.21	50.9	47.0	52.0	54.2	50.9	50.3	51.4	50.7
Total Positive	46.23	46.18	42.1	50.4	46.1	49.4	47.1	44.9	48.4	41.3
Identity	42.47	46.00	44.3	45.8	44.1	44.0	46.7	41.1	49.6	41.0
Self-Satisfaction	51.63	50.40	47.4	57.8	51.4	55.2	51.3	50.2	49.1	43.3
Behavior	44.10	43.67	41.5	44.6	42.2	47.4	44.4	44.1	46.6	37.7
Physical Self	45.27	42.59	39.1	44.6	41.3	50.0	43.6	44.9	46.1	40.7
Moral/Ethical	47.77	47.32	47.1	49.6	47.5	52.2	48.1	47.1	44.1	41.0
Personal Self	51.53	50.04	45.0	50.8	49.9	57.6	50.8	51.8	54.3	41.3
Family Self	45.60	47.77	47.6	57.2	48.4	44.4	47.1	42.2	49.7	47.3
Social Self	44.50	49.68	43.7	45.2	50.3	43.4	51.3	44.0	50.0	48.0

All the Tennessee Self-Concept scores are between 40 and 57 standard scores Tables V and VI). Young adults are quite average when thinking about themselves.

Australian M feel better than Samoan M about their physical self and personal self*. American males feel better about their family selves than NZ males* and American F feel worse about themselves than NZ females.

TABLE VII

Personal Orientation Inventory (Raw Score)

	Total		U.S.A.	Australia	New Zealand	W. Samoa
	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	$\bar{X}$	$\bar{X}$	$\bar{X}$	$\bar{X}$
Time Competence	16.00	3.24	15.1	16.2	16.6	14.0
Self-Actualizing Value	20.04	3.02	19.9	10.7	10.5	16.8*
Existentiality (Flexibility)	20.44	4.96	21.1	18.6	21.1	17.0*
Feeling Reactivity	15.45	3.71	15.2	15.2	16.5	10.0*
Spontaneity	12.44	2.74	11.6	11.8	13.3	10.6
Self Regard	11.69	2.37	10.7	11.7	12.3	9.8
Self-Acceptance	15.19	3.39	15.2	15.1	15.4	13.6
Nature of Man	11.47	1.94	11.3	12.2	11.9	9.6*
Synergy	7.34	1.41	7.8	7.4	7.5	5.9*
Acceptance of Aggression	15.92	3.09	16.2	15.5	16.3	14.3
Capacity for Intimate Contact	17.80	3.49	18.2	17.0	18.3	16.2

TABLE VIII

Personal Orientation Inventory (Raw Score) X Sex

	Total		U.S.A.		Australia		N. Zealand		W. Samoa	
	Males	Female	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Time Competence	16.07	15.97	15.1	15.6	16.2	14.4	16.6	17.4	14.0	12.0*
Self-Actualizing Value	20.10	10.01	19.9	19.8	20.7	18.6	20.5	20.8	16.8	19.0
Existentiality (Flexibility)	21.43	20.06	21.1	21.0	18.6	20.4	21.1	22.8	17.0	15.7*
Feeling Reactivity	16.07	15.22	15.2	17.4	15.2	16.2	16.5	15.5	10.0	16.7
Spontaneity	12.63	12.36	11.6	13.2	11.8	12.4	13.3	12.9	10.6	10.7
Self-Regard	11.83	11.63	10.7	11.4	11.7	11.4	12.3	12.2	9.8	11.0
Self-Acceptance	15.53	15.05	15.2	15.2	15.1	15.0	15.4	16.6	13.6	11.0
Nature of Man	11.13	11.60	11.3	9.0	12.2	11.4	11.9	11.9	9.6	9.7
Synergy	7.37	7.33	7.8	8.6	7.5	6.6	7.5	7.4	5.9	6.3
Acceptance of Aggression	16.03	15.87	16.2	16.6	15.5	16.2	16.3	16.1	14.3	14.7
Capacity for Intimate Contact	17.93	17.74	18.2	19.0	17.0	18.2	18.3	17.8	16.2	16.3

Though similar, the POI profiles for our four groups show some differences.

Samoans are generally lower on all scales and NZ are higher than some groups on several scales. Samoans are lower than Australians* and NZ** on Time Competency. Australian males are lower than NZ males** and Samoan males are lower than NZ males and American males**.

On Self-Actualizing Value, Americans, NZ and Australians are higher than Samoans**. NZ F and Australian F are higher than Samoan females.**.

On Feeling Reactivity, Samoans are less than NZ** and Australians* and Samoan women, in particular, are lower than American women*, NZ women** and Australian women**.

On Spontaneity of Feelings, NZ females are higher than Samoan females**.

On Self-Regard NZ are superior to Samoans** and especially the women**.

The NZ men are higher on Self Acceptance and on Nature of Man, NZ and Australians are higher than Samoans** and NZ and Australian females are higher than Samoan females**.

Finally, American, NZ and Australian females score higher on Synergy than Samoan females**.

When single biographical factors are compared, some seem to make a difference on our personality measures.

The subjects who reported living in many homes had lower POI scores. Living in many homes seems to reduce actualization scores.

Parents divorce seems to reduce family self concept scores, however, worse than divorce on two self-actualization scales is the death of parent. This somewhat supports Parish and Taylor's (1979) conclusion that children who had experienced father loss, and whose mother had not remarried, had significantly lower self-concept than children from intact families.

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*Subjects who felt parents were too lenient or too severe scored lower on self concept subscales.

** $p < .01$

Subjects who feel that parental relation is horrible score higher on some Rorschach variable. Pure F, Original Sex, subjects who feel they have good relationship score higher on self concept and POI scales.

Taking care of a sibling with special problems is ambiguous as these subjects score lower on some scales (capacity for intimate contact but higher on several self-concept scales.)

Individuals who consider religion of major importance in their lives do worse on almost all the POI scales of self-actualizing values.

The subjects who have participated in sports for many years generally score higher on the self concept scores. Those winning individual championships do better on a few scales and worse on a few.

It is very clear that the subjects who reported that they enjoyed a very active dating life do better on all self concept and POI scales. This holds true for those who felt popular as well. Also, those who have had steady relationships have significantly higher self concept and POI scores.

While only a few single factors seemed to relate to our personality variables, dating and feeling popular seemed to be of momentous importance.

Discussion

It does appear that we can generally discuss the universal characteristics of young adults. At least in these four pacific countries the similarities far outweigh the differences. Certainly, the variance may be controlled by the measurement techniques, yet in techniques as different as the Rorschach and the POI the similarities still come out.

Young adults are non disturbed, not highly imaginative and not sexually obsessed. They are not overly constricted but, according to their Rorschachs are not fully mature either. Their fantasies are a mixture of happy and unhappy,

without a great deal of parental conflict. Their self-concept scores suggest that this age group is not narcissistic, but only mediocre in their feelings about themselves. They are slightly below average on most of the POI scales of self-actualizing values. In other words, for the normative historical and age appropriate influences, our 17-22 year olds from four countries are similar. Though there may be some socio-cultural differences between these countries and how young people have been raised during the 1960's and 1970's, still young adult homo sapiens look alike on psychological tests.

Minor differences between cultures appear as they should if development is related to culture. The most glaring between-culture differences relate to the POI. Knapp (1976) has found evidence supporting Maslow's theoretical statement (1970, p. 150) that self actualization of the sort observed in older people was not possible among young developing persons in our society. Our research supports this. The Young Western Samoan adults were lower on the POI scales than the other groups.

The most different culture observed by this researcher was Western Samoa. This small, island nation has been independent since 1962 (previously controlled by New Zealand). It has one major city with some industry and a bustling mixture of nationalities. It has, over the last 100 years, been subjected to a great deal of Christian missionary work and has both active public and parochial school systems. Much of the country still consists of small villages with open walled, thatched huts called fales. The 180,000 people exist in a mixture of Polynesian, Christian and industrialized influences. It is somewhat amazing that the young Samoan adults studied were as similar as they were to the other populations on most of our personality instruments.

New Zealand is a small English country with a great tradition of allegiance to the United Kingdom. This researcher's impressions do not agree with

Ausubel (1960) but, more importantly, we decided to open the horse's mouth and count the teeth. The New Zealanders are similar to our other groups on the Rorschach, have slightly more unhappiness in their TAT stories than either Americans or Australians, show no major differences on the Tennessee Self-Concept, but do show some on the POI. They are about half a standard deduction higher on expression of and sensitivity to their feelings on the POI (Figure 2), This researcher's impressions were that New Zealanders were somewhat reserved yet active, robust, and friendly. They are law abiding and advanced in terms of values dealing with conservation, care for others and feelings for the outdoors. Yet, we must consider that impressions are related to the interactions between 'impressee' and 'impressor'.

Australia seemed to be the most similar to the U.S.A. and the research bears this out. The way of life and values seemed to be parallel whether the researcher was in Sydney or a rural farm in Jondaryan shire.

As to the question of idiographic events in one's life, it was found that some background events were significantly related to adult personality characteristics. In some cases, the subjective feeling was more important than the events. Still, the most general conclusion is that despite idiographic events, our young adults look very similar.

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